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Provost and President,  
University College, London

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Programme Adviser and former  
Director of Green Alliance

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Consumer Affairs Director for  
the Financial Services Authority

**Helen Browning OBE**

Tenant farmer, Eastbrook  
Farm; Founder and Director  
of Eastbrook Farm Organic  
Meats Ltd

**Dr David Buckeridge**

Business Director of Advanta  
Seeds, responsible for European  
and American operations

**Dr David Carmichael**

Arable farmer with an interest  
in non-food crops

**Professor Philip Dale**

Leader of the Genetic  
Modification and Biosafety  
Research Group at the John  
Innes Centre, Norwich

**Dr Ed Dart CBE**

Chairman of Plant Bioscience Ltd

**Dr Matthew Freeman**

Senior Researcher at the  
Medical Research Council  
Laboratory of Molecular Biology

**John Gilliland OBE**

President of the Ulster Farmers  
Union and arable farmer with a  
particular interest in sustainable  
production systems and the  
pioneering of non-food crops

**Professor Robin Grove-White**

Professor of Environment  
and Society, and Director  
of the Centre for the Study  
of Environmental Change,  
Lancaster University

**Dr Rosemary Hails MBE**

Ecologist, and Principal  
Scientific Officer, Centre for  
Ecology and Hydrology, Oxford,  
and Lecturer at St Anne's  
College Oxford

**Judith Hann**

Freelance Broadcaster and  
Writer, who presented BBC's  
Tomorrow's World for 20 years

**Ms Chi Chi Iweajunwa**

Member of Executive  
Evaluation Group for NHS  
Direct, and member of Partners  
Council for NICE (National  
Institute for Clinical Excellence)

**Dr Derek Langslow CBE**

Scientist specialising in nature  
conservation/biodiversity and  
former Chief Executive of  
English Nature

**Professor Keekok Lee**

Visiting Chair in Philosophy,  
Institute for Environment,  
Philosophy and Public Policy  
at Lancaster University

**Professor Jeff Maxwell OBE**

Former Director, Macaulay  
Land Use Research Institute

**Dr Sue Mayer**

Executive Director of  
Genewatch UK

**Dr Paul Rylott**

Former Chairman of the  
Agriculture Biotechnology  
Council (ABC), with a strong  
interest in new technologies for  
agriculture and a background  
in farming and plant science.

**Justine Thornton**

Barrister specialising in  
environmental law

biotechnology  
commission (AEBC)

Government's  
independent adviser  
on developments in  
biotechnology and  
their implications for  
agriculture and the  
environment

biotechnology  
commission



Agriculture and Environment  
Biotechnology Commission (AEBC)



What is the future for GM crops and GM food in the UK? Our views of the great revolution in biotechnology which has produced GM crops, GM animals and GM food tend to be strongly held and deeply polarised. It's the job of the **Biotechnology Commission (AEBC)** to take these concerns and enthusiasms on board, talk to those people with an interest, look at the evidence and advise the Government on how these important issues should be handled. Under its terms of reference the Commission has to take ethical and social issues into account as well as the scientific ones.

It's an unusual body - strongly independent although Government funded - and made up of representatives with a wide range of skills and expertise from all sides of the GM argument: scientists, people from biotech industries, green campaigners, lawyers and academics including a philosopher. Since it was set up in Summer 2000 it has held its meetings in public and published its reports – from early drafts to final conclusions – on the web ([www.aebc.gov.uk](http://www.aebc.gov.uk)) together with all its minutes and advance notice of future meetings.

The Commission holds five main meetings a year, alternately in London and elsewhere – recently including Belfast, Edinburgh, Cardiff and the Eden Project in Cornwall. It operates alongside the Human Genetics Commission (HGC), which advises on new developments in human genetics, and the Food Standards Agency (FSA), which is responsible for food safety, including GM food.

So far the Commission has published three major reports –

*Crops on Trial* (September 2001), which looked at the role of the Farm Scale Evaluations in decision-making on whether to allow GM crops to be grown commercially;

*Animals and Biotechnology* (September 2002), which took a strategic look at the ability of the existing regulatory system to cope with the possible development of GM and cloned animals; and

*GM Crops? Coexistence and Liability* (November 2003), which looked at whether GM crops could practically exist alongside conventional and organic farming and allow real choice to consumers.

It was also the driving force behind *GM Nation?* – the national GM debate (in Summer 2003) proposed by the Commission and run by a Steering Board made up of eight Biotechnology commissioners together with three independent members.

We want to hear from you. You can contact us through our website, [www.aebc.gov.uk](http://www.aebc.gov.uk) or at:

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